Mixed Anchoring in French Hypocoristic Formation*

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This paper explores the anchoring effects exhibited by French hypocoristics, which are derived from their corresponding base names by truncation. I focus on left versus right anchoring: while left anchoring of the truncated form to the base name is the default case, right anchoring can occur under compulsion to satisfy a higher-ranked constraint, namely ONSET. This pattern exemplifies a prediction of Optimality Theory presented by Samek-Lodovici (1997), showing how the lower-ranked of two opposing constraints can still be active in a grammar. An OT analysis of edge anchoring not only allows for such a result, but predicts it to be possible given the fundamental components of the theory: constraints and re-ranking.

1 Introduction

In the formation of hypocoristics (nicknames) in French, anchoring to an edge of the base name is largely apparent. However, the credentials determining *which* edge is selected in the process involves conflict between anchoring constraints and structural ones, an interaction which serves as the focus of this paper.

The data divide into two different categories: one of simple truncation to the size of a bi-syllabic foot, and the other, although the same size, involving reduplication. Examples of the data are given below. Notice that the hypocoristic is always C-initial, with loss of the initial vowel in the cases involving a V-initial base name:

(1) 3σs and more: (Truncation)

C-initial			**V-initial**		
H-form	*Name*		*H-form*	*Name*	
ka.ro	ka.ro.lin	'Caroline'	lo.di	e.lo.di	'Elodie'
do.ro	do.ro.te	'Dorothée'	za.bet	e.li.za.bet	'Elizabeth'
do.mi	do.mi.nik	'Dominique'	me.li	a.me.li	'Amélie'

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(2) fewer than 3σs: (Truncation plus Reduplication)

C-initial			**V-initial**		
H-form	*Name*		*H-form*	*Name*	
ni.ni	ni.kol	'Nicole'	to.to	o.to	'Otto'
mi.mi	mi.ʃel	'Michelle'	mi.mil	e.mil	'Emile'
to.to	to.ma	'Thomas'	be.ber	y.ber	'Hubert'

In both cases, the hypocoristic maps to a bi-syllabic foot, which is an Emergence of the Unmarked effect (McCarthy & Prince 1994). This target can be characterized by the following ranking, based on Benua (1995):

(3) MAX IO » PARSE-σ, ALL-FEET RIGHT » MAX BT

This shows that although words in the language at large may contain any number of syllables, in order to best satisfy the emergent templatic requirements in the domain of truncation, they will be no longer (or shorter) than a bi-syllabic foot.

Organization of this paper proceeds as follows: section two illustrates the satisfaction of left vs. right anchoring in the case of these data. Section three offers an analysis of the type of data in (1); section four expands the analysis to account for the data in (2). Augmentation to bi-syllabic size, which is achieved through reduplication, is examined in section five. The conclusion, section six, briefly outlines and compares previous accounts, and offers areas for future research.

2 Default vs. deactivated left anchoring

Samek-Lodovici (1997) draws attention to the following prediction of an Optimality Theoretic analysis of anchoring: given the appropriate configuration, compulsion to satisfy a high-ranking constraint could hypothetically force violation of the higher-ranking of opposing anchor constraints, allowing evidence of the lower one to surface. The general schema is as follows (crucially assuming categorical reckoning of ANCHOR violations[1])

[1] There are clear instances in the literature where Anchor/(Alignment) violations must be reckoned gradiently, (cf. Makassarese McCarthy 1997, *Align*-um, McCarthy & Prince 1993). However, the analysis of epenthesis in Axininca Campa (same publication) requires categorical calculation of violations.

(4) Schema for default to, and deactivation of left anchoring (Samek-Lodovici 1997)

Winner: left-anchored

For some input *i*	D	$Anch_L$	$Anch_R$
$cand_1$		*!	*
$cand_2$		*!	
☞ $cand_3$			*

Winner: right-anchored

For some input *i*	D	$Anch_L$	$Anch_R$
$cand_1$		*	*!
☞ $cand_2$		*	
$cand_3$	*!		*

The following example illustrates the need for categorical reckoning, as gradient reckoning yields the wrong winner:

(5) ANCHOR LEFT » ANCHOR RIGHT (gradient)

Input: e.li.za.bet	ONSET	ANCHOR LEFT	ANCHOR RIGHT
a. zabet		**!*	
b. wrong winner liza		*	***
c. eli	*!		*****

Stress in French is always final, therefore the effects may be due to positional faithfulness rather than right anchoring, with MAX–σ′ being operative. However, having noted this alternative analysis, I will set it aside. Independent evidence for an ANCHOR-RIGHT constraint exists, (cf. reduplication in Semai (Hendricks 1998), and Malay, for example), so I will continue to pursue the opposing anchoring analysis.

Hypocoristics in French will anchor left by default, as illustrated in the examples in (6):

(6)
a. ka.ro.lin → ka.ro ‘Caroline’
b. do.mi.nik → do.mi ‘Dominique’
c. ga.bri.el → ga.bi ‘Gabrielle’
d. do.ro.te → do.ro ‘Dorothée’

In all of these cases, the hypocoristic anchors left, and shortens to bi-syllabic size. The cluster simplification in (c) (*br* becomes *b*) suggests that we also see the emergence of the effects of a constraint against complex clusters in the realm of Base-Truncatum relations. Exploration of this issue however will be postponed.

Below is a simplified tableau using the form *dorote*, which shows the interaction of the opposing anchoring constraints. As no violation of ONSET is at issue, the higher-ranked ANCHOR LEFT is free to exert its effects:

(7) ANCHOR LEFT » ANCHOR RIGHT (categorical)

Input: do.ro.te	ONSET	ANCHOR LEFT	ANCHOR RIGHT
a. ☞ doro			*
b. rote		*!	

However, onsets have a high priority in the hypocoristic system[2]. Thus in the case where the base (name) begins with a vowel, left anchoring must be sacrificed. ONSET is then shown to act just as the high-ranked constraint *D* in the schema above, capable of de-activating ANCHOR LEFT.

Examples of this interaction are given below:

(8) a. er.nes.tin → nes.tin 'Ernestine'
b. e.li.za.bet → za.bet 'Elizabeth'
c. e.lo.di → lo.di 'Elodie'

(9) ONSET » ANCHOR LEFT

Input: e.li.za.bet	ONSET	ANCHOR LEFT	ANCHOR RIGHT
a. ☞ zabet		*	
b. liza		*	*!
c. eli	*!		*

In (9), we see the winning candidate (a) is preferable to one that is left anchored, but fatally violates ONSET (c), or one that does not anchor at all, even though it incurs no violations of ONSET (b).

3 Truncation

I take truncation to be the operation responsible for the reduction in size. The constraints relevant to the analysis thus far are given below:

[2] This is in striking contrast with other truncations in the language generally. Outside the realm of hypocoristics, when words are truncated, they are uniformly left-anchored, with no regard for ONSET cf. *agreg* ; *agregation* 'a type of test'; *alloc; allocation* 'allowance', etc.

(10) a. ANCHOR LEFT$_{BT}$: Anchor L(Trunc, Base). The left edge of the truncatum must correspond to the left edge of the base.
b. ANCHOR RIGHT$_{BT}$: Anchor R(Trunc, Base). The right edge of the truncatum must correspond to the right edge of the base.
c. CONTIGUITY: The portion of the base standing in correspondence forms a contiguous string, as does the correspondent portion of the truncated form. (McCarthy & Prince 1994)
d. ONSET: $*_{\sigma}[$V (Itô 1989)
e. NO CODA: *…C$]_{\sigma}$
f. MAX $_{BT}$: Every segment of the base form must correspond to a member of the truncated form.

The ranking given below will be established in this section:

(11) CONTIGUITY » ONSET » ANCHOR LEFT$_{BT}$ » ANCHOR RIGHT$_{BT}$ » NO CODA » MAX$_{BT}$

I take the relation between base and truncatum to result from OO correspondence, as illustrated in Benua (1995):

(12) *BT-Identity*

Base ←→ **Truncatum**
↑
IO-Faith ↓
Input

This relation is demonstrated below, using the name *Dorothée*:

(13) *BT-Identity*

[do.ro.te] ←→ [do.ro]
↑
IO-Faith ↓
/dorote/

(14) NOCODA » MAX$_{BT}$; ANCHOR LEFT » ANCHOR RIGHT

Input: do.ro.te	ONSET	ANCHOR LEFT	ANCHOR RIGHT	NOCODA	MAX$_{BT}$
a. ☞ doro			*		te
b. dorot			*	*!	e
c. rote		*!			do

We see the crucial dominance of ANCHOR LEFT (c), and the subordination of MAX to NO CODA (b) .

The following tableau illustrates more fully that the high ranking of ONSET is crucial:

(15) ONSET » ANCHOR LEFT; ANCHOR RIGHT » NO CODA

Input: e.li.za.bet	ONSET	CONTIG	ANCHOR LEFT	ANCHOR RIGHT	NO CODA	MAX_{BT}
a. ☞ zabet			*		*	eli
b. zabe			*	*!		eli,t
c. liza			*	*!		e,bet
d. eli	*!			*		zabet
e. ebet	*!	*			*	liza

This example shows that once ANCHOR LEFT is sacrificed to ONSET, we have to consider the possibility of ANCHOR RIGHT, and thus the possibility of having a final C. The dependency between the presence of an onset in the base versus presence of a coda in the hypocoristic is schematized in (16):

(16) a. C-initial Name → V-final hypocoristic
b. V-initial name → possibly C-final hypocoristic

Below we see evidence that although ONSET is high-ranked in this system, it is not undominated. When given the choice to violate CONTIGUITY or to violate ONSET when confronted with a tri-syllabic name with a medial onsetless syllable, the ranking opts to do the latter:

(17) CONTIGUITY » ONSET

Input: be.a.tris	CONTIG	ONSET	ANCHOR LEFT	ANCHOR RIGHT	NO CODA	MAX_{BT}
a. ☞ bea		*		*		tris
b. beat		*		*	*!	ris
c. atris		*	*!			be
d. betris	*!				*	a

Candidate (d), although it satisfies both ONSET and the anchor constraints, fails CONTIGUITY, fatally. The winner then violates ONSET, but is contiguous and left anchored.

Another mapping predicted by the ranking is one where, given onsetless syllables at both edges and enough inner syllables to satisfy the prosodic requirements, the hypocoristic will anchor at neither edge, in order to satisfy ONSET. This mapping is attested, with the form *emanuel*:

(18) Violation of both anchoring constraints

Input: e.ma.nu.el	CONTIG	ONSET	ANCHOR LEFT	ANCHOR RIGHT	NO CODA	MAX_{BT}
a. ☞ manu			*	*		e,el
b. ema		*!		*		nuel
c. nuel		*!	*		*	ema
d. eel	*!	**			*	manu

The winning candidate (a) does not anchor to either edge; rather, the second and third syllables contiguously form the hypocoristic, with both these syllables bearing onsets.

Note that if there were a name with more than four syllables and a similar conflict of interests, that is, onsetless syllables on both edges and all other syllables *with* onsets, then it is not clear from the analysis as it stands which two would be selected. Mainly, the analysis crucially does not predict that the leftmost C-initial syllables would form the hypocoristic, because of the necessarily categorical reckoning of ANCHOR LEFT. However, there appears to be a maximal size restriction on names in French that limits them to two bi-syllabic feet. There are hyphenated names which together comprise more than four syllables, e.g. *Marie-Caroline.* But the phonology of these does not treat them as a single unit, so they will not help in extending the analysis in this way. An analysis of how hyphenated names do behave is beyond the scope of this paper[3].

4 Truncation plus reduplication

Turning our attention rather to the base names at the other end of the size scale, what about names that are already the requisite size, namely bi-syllabic? Under the current ranking, C-initial names are predicted to be non-distinct from their inputs. For example:

[3] In case the reader is curious, the hypocoristic for *Marie-Caroline* is [ma.ka]. This left-anchoring of each of the names internal to the hyphenated names is interesting, relevant and robustly attested for the cases where each name is C-initial, but because these forms contain their own idiosyncrasies, I will say nothing more about them here.

(19) ni.kol → ni.kol ‘Nicole’

(20) Vacuous hypocoristic formation

Input: ni.kol	ONSET	ANCHOR LEFT	ANCHOR RIGHT	NO CODA	MAX$_{BT}$
a. ☞ nikol				*	
b. niko			*!		l

However, this result seems to escape the purpose of forming a hypocoristic, that is, of altering the base name somehow. In order to account for these names, I will propose that a second input is also available. Support for this claim also comes from the fact that in most names that contain more than two syllables, the input will derive a grammatical hypocoristic; this will be addressed below. The relevant input for these cases includes a reduplicative morpheme, RED.

When present, RED will inevitably be one syllable in size. This is guaranteed by the ranking in (3); in order to satisfy the size requirement, and to maximally satisfy MAX-BR, (with “Base” here referring to the truncated portion of the name which the reduplicant copies; the underlined portion in (21) corresponds to RED[4]).:

(21)	a.	ni.kol	→	ni.ni	‘Nicole’
	b.	mi.ʃel	→	mi.mi	‘Michelle’
	c.	to.ma	→	to.to	‘Thomas’

High-ranked REALIZE RED forces the realization of the reduplicant. Thus, when RED is present in the input, both it and the truncated portion of the name will be reduced to a monosyllable; in the truncatum, we have the added possibility of keeping the word-final coda in order to satisfy ANCHOR RIGHT.

With this new input, we can now illustrate the effects of the ranking established earlier, which yields the correct output:

[4] The status of the reduplicant as a prefix is determined based on cases of vowel-initial names with word final codas, e.g. *emil, mimil* (see 23).

(22) REALIZE RED » ANCHOR RIGHT

Input: RED+ni.kol	RLZ RED	ANCHOR LEFT	ANCHOR RIGHT	NO CODA	MAX_{BT}	MAX_{BR}
a. ☞ nini			*		kol	
b. ninik			*	*!	ol	k
c. niknik			*	*!*	ol	
d. kokol		*!		*	ni	l
e. nikol	*!			*		nikol

Realization of the reduplicant is more important than anchoring of both edges of the truncatum[5] as shown with the failure of candidate (e), which satisfies the anchoring constraints. RLZ RED must dominate at least one of the anchoring constraints, (ANCHOR RIGHT, as it is the lower-ranked). Candidate (d) violates ANCHOR LEFT, and is thus ruled out. The codas in (b) and (c) are gratuitous, leaving (a) as the optimal candidate.

Similarly, the ranking will yield the optimal form of a hypocoristic derived from a V-initial name:

(23) a. e.mil → mi.mil 'Emile'
b. o.to → to.to 'Otto'
c. e.len → le.len 'Hélène'

Like the V-initial names above, these hypocoristics will end in a C if the name does, in contrast to the forms corresponding to C-initial names. Below we see again how compulsion to satisfy ANCHOR RIGHT will lead to violation of NOCODA in this special case:

(24) ANCHOR RIGHT » NO CODA; NO CODA » MAX BR

Input: RED+e.mil	ONSET	ANCHOR LEFT	ANCHOR RIGHT	NO CODA	MAX_{BT}	MAX_{BR}
a. ☞ mimil		*		*	e	l
b. milmil		*		**!	e	
c. mimi		*	*!		e,l	
d. ee	*!*		*		mil	

[5] In fact, calling upon a reduplicative morpheme RED seems like an escape hatch to avoid the undesirable result of having a nickname which is homophonous to the original. However this is in no way captured by the analysis; as it stands, two inputs are available, and in these cases only one yields a hypocoristic which is distinct from the base name.

Interestingly, this input can apply equally effectively to base names of more than three syllables, e.g. *dorote, ernestin* from above, yielding a (different) but possible hypocoristic:

(25) a. do.ro.te → do.do 'Dorothée'
b. er.nes.tin → ti.tin 'Ernestine'

(26) Reduplication with bases > 2σs

Input: RED+do.ro.te	ONS	ANCHOR LEFT	ANCHOR RIGHT	NO CODA	MAX_{BT}	MAX_{BR}
a. ☞ dodo			*		rote	
b. dodor			*	*!	ote	r
c. dordor			*	*!*	ote	
d. tete		*!			doro	

(27)

Input: RED+er.nes.tin	ONS	ANCHOR LEFT	ANCHOR RIGHT	NO CODA	MAX_{BT}	MAX_{BR}
a. ☞ titin		*		*	ernes	n
b. titi		*	*!		ernes,n	
c. nene		*	*!		er,stin	
d. erer	*!*		*	**	nestin	

5 Reduplication only

What does the ranking predict for an input of a V-initial monosyllable? From the behavior of the following forms, we find that in addition to the constraints already discussed, LINEARITY, as defined by McCarthy and Prince (1995), is also active:

(28) a. an → na.na 'Anne'
b. iv → vi.vi 'Yves'
c. yg → gy.gy 'Hugues'

The resulting nickname is again bi-syllabic, and satisfies ONSET. Linearity is defined as follows:

(29) LINEARITY$_{BT}$: S1 reflects the precedence structure of S2, and vice versa. For α_i , $\alpha_j \in$ Domain(f), $\alpha_i < \alpha_j$ iff $f(\alpha_i) < f(\alpha_j)$ (McCarthy &Prince 1995). (Precedence must be obeyed; correspondence must be one-to-one).

(30) DEP » LINEARITY; LINEARITY » ANCHOR RIGHT

Input: RED+a_1n_2	ONSET	DEP	LINEARITY	ANCHOR RIGHT	NO CODA
a. ☞ <u>na</u>-n_2a_1			*	*	
b. <u>na</u>-$n_2a_1n_2$			**!		*
c. <u>ta</u>-ta_1		*!		*	
d. <u>an</u>- a_1n_2	*!*				*

Without the addition of LINEARITY, the form (b), which satisfies ANCHOR RIGHT, would be the optimal candidate. In this form, *a* is preceded by *n*, which adds a LINEARITY violation to both candidates (a) and (b). What proves fatal for (b) is the multiple correspondence of the *n* in the base. Candidate (c) contains an epenthetic segment to satisfy ONSET, showing that DEP » LINEARITY.

6 Conclusion

To conclude, I would like to compare the analysis presented here with other accounts, highlighting the differences. I will also outline some basic predictions of the analysis, and present my remaining questions.

The earliest analysis of French hypocoristics of which I am aware is that of Plénat (1982). Observing that most of the forms complied with a CVCV(C) template, he posited exactly that, under the name 'ANAR', *Attaque-Noyau-Attaque-Rhyme*, or *Onset-Nucleus-Onset-Rime*, where the rime (but not the nucleus) could be either simple or branching. Upon criticism that the template did not account for all documented hypocoristics, he later expanded it to the following: ((AN)AN)AR. But with this move, he lost the ability to explain the overwhelming majority of bi-syllabic forms. Also, the second suffered from over-generation.

In order to account for the generalization that the hypocoristics are largely bi-syllabic, Weeda (1992) claimed that they were achieved by mapping to a syllabic trochee, a bi-syllabic foot. Before mapping to the template, he assumed a planar segregation of vowels and consonants, assuming that non-CV syllables do not receive a V/C representation. This way, he accounts for the obligatoriness of onsets and the markedness of CC clusters. In order to capture the fact that codas were only permitted when the ANAR corresponded to the end of a name, he made the following additional stipulation: the template for right-edge ANARs is "loose", meaning it allows for the addition of an extrametrical consonant, as in *mimil*, whereas the template for the left-edge is "strict", allowing for no such extrametricality, cf. *karo.*

Scullen (1993) rather aims to unify all French "abbreviations", i.e. reduplications, clippings, hypocoristics, acronyms, and language games. Thus, she proposes a "well-formedness filter" that constrains phonologically derived words in French, with this filter being the maximally binary Prosodic Word template. This filter accounts for the size of most phonologically derived words of French, (except the monosyllables, which have a historical explanation in her view). However, what is lost is the generalization that the internal structure of these abbreviations differs predictably from the original names.

The analysis presented here differs from its predecessors in important ways. The first is that it is not ashamed to undergenerate, (whereas the others mentioned overgenerate profusely). Using the framework of OT, characteristics of these hypocoristics which were elusive before now receive a principled explanation. The near-obligatoriness of onsets results from the high-ranking of the constraint requiring them, ONSET[6]. We can also explain the appearance of codas only when the form is right-anchored, since only then will having a coda be beneficial in that it is crucial to the satisfaction of the anchoring constraint.

The analysis maximally predicts two hypocoristics for a given name, whereas Scullen reports up to 16 forms for a name, *Dominique*[7]. But the predictions of the analysis are robustly attested, with exceptions often being due to homophony with another (unpleasant, or else very common) word, e.g. **kaka* 'Caroline', **mama* 'Marie', etc.

Also, the analysis provides another illustration of the prediction of Samek-Lodovici's schema, by which the lower-ranked of opposing constraints can have its effects witnessed in a language if the higher of these constraints is decapacitated by a conflicting, dominating constraint.

Finally, I will address a couple of remaining issues, the first of which involves the behavior of consonant clusters. Consonant clusters often simplify in the hypocoristic form; examples of this simplification follow:

(31)	*Hypocoristic*	*Name*	
a.	fã.fã	frã.swaz	'Françoise'
b.	de.de	ã.dre	'André'
c.	ki.ki	kris.tin	'Christine'
d.	gy.gys	o.gyst	'Auguste'

[6] See (17) for a case where Onset is violated in *Bea*.

[7] Namely, *Bic, Dédé, Do, Dodo, Dom, Domi, Domini, Minou, Domino, Doni, Mimi, Mimique, Mini, Minique, Nanou,* and *Nini* (Scullen 1993:156).

All of these forms show violation of CONTIGUITY in the name of consonant cluster simplification. Therefore, whatever constraint prohibits these clusters, (*COMPLEX is often used), must dominate CONTIGUITY. This is complicated by the fact that in some cases, an alternate form which maintains the cluster is also documented, e.g. *krikri* for 'Christine'. But not all cases where a cluster appears in the base name can include a cluster in the hypocoristic. And when a hypocoristic contains a cluster, another clusterless form is also attested, suggesting that an implication can be drawn. Specifically, I propose that if the cluster exists in a hypocoristic form, then the simplified variant must also be grammatical. But there is still a problem with respect to the analysis. Even if *COMPLEX is effectively undominated, CONTIGUITY (cf. *bea*, **betris*), not ANCHOR-LEFT, should decide the winner, yielding for example **rãrã* in the case of (27a). Katy Carlson (p.c.) points out however that the last case may be due to sonority restrictions, with the *f* thus constituting a better onset than the more sonorous *r.*

The second remaining issue is typology. Another grammar predicted by the proposed constraints is one in which ANCHOR LEFT » ONSET. This appears to be the case for Hungarian, which also adds a suffix to truncated hypocoristics:

(32)	a.	András	→	Andris
	b.	Erzsébet	→	Erzsi
	c.	Zsigmond	→	Zsiga

The fact that Hungarian has word-initial stress is surely related to this pattern; in fact, the existence of a system in which initially stressed names anchor right anywise seems unlikely, suggesting that the analysis requires refinement.

The following is an example if a system in which ANCHOR RIGHT does decide the default anchoring, given that the target forms contain onsets. This data is taken from child truncations in K'iche' (Demuth 1996):

(33)	*Child form*		*Adult target*	
	a.	lom	jo<u>lom</u>	'head'
	b.	met	le<u>met</u>	'bottle'
	c.	kop	chi<u>kop</u>	'animal'
	d.	'ik	wa'<u>ik</u>	'eat'

The comparison seems valid, as hypocoristic systems have often been noted to be akin to the simplified grammar of child language. However, K'iche' has word-final stress, thus once again raising the issue of the importance of faithfulness to the prosodic head in the competition, an option which I am currently pursuing.

In summary, the analysis proposed here provides not only an explanation of the mandatoriness of onsets and the criteria by which a given French hypocoristic will opt to surface with or sans coda, but it also more generally explores the nature of opposing anchoring constraints, with rather dramatic examples of how the force of each can be apparent in a single system.

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